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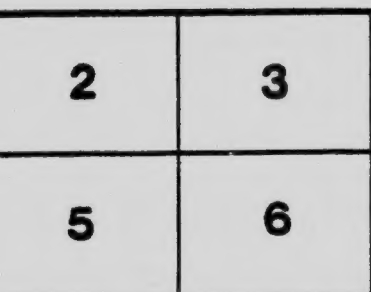
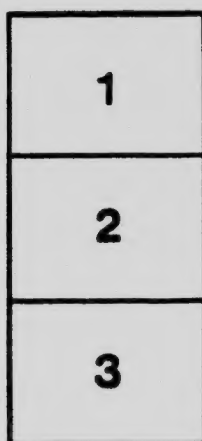
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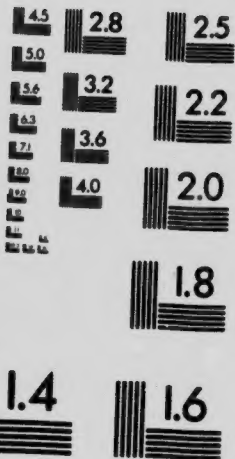


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AN OBJECT LESSON

CHARACTERS

FRED PRATT.

RALPH WOOD.

MR. PRATT, *Fred's father.*MR. WOOD, *Ralph's uncle.*

Ralph—I've brought your book back. It's tip-top.

Fred—Oh, the Banditi Revenge? I think it's splendid. Bill, the bandit, was a *glorious* fellow, wasn't he? Wasn't it comical—the way he entrapped the stage passengers in the mountains. What jolly times the bandits had!

Ralph—Fred, it's just the sort of wild roaring life *I'd* like. I wouldn't dare say so at home, but I would; and I think Bill the bandit, and Sam the outlaw, and Phil the renegade, were every whit as good as these steady-going folks around here.

Fred—So do I. You know Bill never murdered unless it was *necessary*.

Ralph—No; and Sam always stood ready to defend any poor fellow in distress. Phil was a first-rate fellow, if he did vow vengeance on the red-skins. He never spared any, men, women or children.

Fred—I don't blame him for killing the Indians. Didn't they murder his mother and sisters?

Ralph—I don't blame him, either. They *ought* to be exterminated. I tell you, Fred, I've half made up my mind to go out on the plains, or into the mountains and try the jolly adventurous life of a road-agent myself. I don't propose to stay at home and dig potatoes, ~~like~~ corn, saw wood, and such menial tasks as those, when I might be flying over the plains in my saddle.

Fred—I'm tired of such a humdrum life myself. Going to school is just as poky as work. But I don't suppose five dollars would take us far. We might starve before we could reach the frontier.

Ralph—Starve? What did Sam the outlaw do? Helped himself, didn't he? He had some pretty rich experience, too. You remember how he took possession of a pantry once, and when the cook came in, frightened her nearly out of her wits by flinging a sheet around himself and playing the ghost. He had his fill on pies and cake

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without further disturbance. Now we could forage off the country as he did.

Fred—Oh, I suppose we could. As for the rest, we have revolvers and know how to use them.

Ralph—Yes ; I tell you, I'll have some Indian scalps to grace my belt before the year is out. Did you know that the red demons killed my uncle's family in Minnesota in the outbreak of '62 ? I've a little account to settle with them, as Phil the renegade had.

[Two men suddenly confront the boys. Messrs. PRATT and WOOD have determined to give the boys a useful "object lesson." They present drawn revolvers.]

Mr. P.—Hold up your hands ! (They throw up their hands while the men rifle their pockets.)

Mr. P. (to *Fred*)—Now, young gentleman, if you wish to get off with a sound skull, tell me what disposal your honored father made of that \$5,000 he drew from the bank this morning. Where did he put it ?

Fred—I—I—how should I know ? He—wouldn't—be likely to tell me.

Mr. P.—No equivocation, young man ! (Brings his revolver in close contact with *Fred's* forehead, at which *Fred* shrinks back in great alarm.)

Fred—Oh, don't kill me, sir ; I'll tell you where the money is. He put it in a small box and locked it in the secretary in the library.

Mr. P.—That'll do. Your mother has some jewelry, I suppose. Where can it be found ?

Fred—She has a gold watch and a diamond brooch. They will be on the dressing table in her room. But—oh—don't harm my mother, please don't, sir.

Mr. P.—I'll see about that. If they keep quiet it's all right. I never murder unless it is necessary.

Mr. Wood (who has been confronting *Ralph* with drawn pistol during the parley)—Now, youngster, tell me where your governor keeps his valuables.

Ralph—We have nothing valuable—we're poor. *Fred*, here, will testify to that.

Fred—Yes, sir ; they are poor.

Mr. W.—Perhaps so, but I believe the old gent parted with a span of horses to-day. Now, you young scoundrel, tell me where he put the money he got. (Places his pistol close to *Ralph's* ear, at which he falls back very much frightened.)

Ralph.—He keeps his money
straw-tick under his pillow.

Mr. W.—That'll do. No
these fellows down and leave

Fred—Oh, don't !—don't !—
don't gag us. (*Ralph begins to*

Mr. P.—These fellows show
soon, considering they aspire
selves. (*They throw off their*

Fred—Oh, father !

[CURTAIN]

s money in a pocket-book in the
flow.

o. Now, Roaring Jack, let's tie
and leave them gagged until—

don't !—don't ! Please, gentlemen,
begins to cry.)

ws show the white feather pretty
aspire to be highwaymen them-
f their masks.)

[CURTAIN]

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